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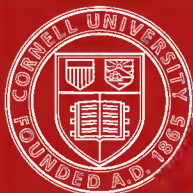
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Out where the West begins, and other west



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Out where the West Begins

OUT WHERE THE WEST BEGINS

And Other Western Verses

By
Arthur Chapman



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Out where the West Begins

OUT WHERE THE WEST BEGINS

*Out where the handclasp's a little stronger,
Out where the smile dwells a little longer,
That's where the West begins;
Out where the sun is a little brighter,
Where the snows that fall are a trifle whiter,
Where the bonds of home are a wee bit tighter,
That's where the West begins.*

*Out where the skies are a trifle bluer,
Out where friendship's a little truer,
That's where the West begins;
Out where a fresher breeze is blowing,
Where there's laughter in every streamlet flowing,
Where there's more of reaping and less of sowing,
That's where the West begins.*

*Out where the world is in the making,
Where fewer hearts in despair are aching,
That's where the West begins;
Where there's more of singing and less of sighing,
Where there's more of giving and less of buying,
And a man makes friends without half trying —
That's where the West begins.*

THE CHANGED HILLS

THE hills on which the cattle grazed
Are strange to-day unto my eyes ;
The plough has severed, as a sword,
All the appealing, olden ties ;
The apple trees are blossoming—
I see their promise gleaming there ;
And smell their perfume, heavy, sweet,
Where once the wild sage filled the air.

The hills on which the cattle grazed
Were once the battle-grounds where men,
Far from the haunts of womankind,
Won, or were beaten—life throbbed then
With meanings all unknown to-day.
Where once the roundup camp-fire blazed,
The ranch light shines like star upon
The hills on which the cattle grazed.

ARROYO AL ON WEALTH

THIS game of git-rich-pronto seems
A foolish sort of thing;
The mau who has such wondrous dreams
Is wastin' time, by jing!

Which thoughts are prompted by the case
Of Poker Bill McGuire,
Who cleaned this lively little place
And left us broke entire.

His saddle-pockets bulged with wealth
When Billy rode away,
But soon we found he'd won by stealth —
Marked cards had been his lay.

And so we hit a shorter trail
Across the foothill crags,
And nabbed that graspin', orn'ry male
And took his saddle-bags.

And Billy's dead, his dream has bu'st
And vanished, light as foam;
We're holdin' all his wealth in trust
To found a orphans' home.

ARROYO AL ON WORRY

THEY 'D make a rattlin' roundup, sure,
The troubles known to man,
If we could gather all the kinds
Since this old world began.

But 'mong the troubles on life's range, —
The common and preferred, —
That critter labeled Worry is
The orn'riest of the herd.

You think you 've got him roped and tied
And humbled in the dust,
But soon that critter's up again
And raisin' clouds of dust.

You 're feelin' fine — the sky is blue,
Your laugh's a happy man's —
But Worry comes cavortin' in -
And stampedes all your plans.

Seems like, when this here world was made
For me and you, old pal,
This Worry critter should have been
Shut tight in some corral.

THE DEAD PROSPECTOR

THE hills shall miss him — while the pines,
Through which he wandered o'er the slopes,
Shall ask the nodding columbines
Of him — the Man of Living Hopes.

He loved the mountains — when came Spring
He turned unto the greening way,
And, as one hoards a priceless thing,
He counted grudgingly each day.

The heights were his — let those who would
Seek ease in vales stretched far beneath;
Where gleams yon gaunt peak's snowy hood
His camp-fire smoke curled like a wreath.

His quest was vain — and yet who knows
How little meant the gold he sought;
Enough for him Fall's golden glows,
And colors in the sunset wrought.

MOVING PICTURES IN CACTUS CENTER

THE culture game in Cactus has been boosted quite a spell
By a gent with movin' pictures — and he played the
show game well ;

But he had himself sure tangled, and the uplift game was
messed

When he tried to show a drammer of the palpitatin' West.

The hall was filled with punchers when he tuned up his
machine,

And showed us what was labeled a real Wild Western
scene ;

There was mountains in the background, which was real
enough, perhaps,

But you oughter seen them actors that cavorted round
in chaps !

We stood it without knockin' till a bronk drifts in the play
And the cowboy and his sweetheart make their weddin'
getaway ;

Then we groans in chorus mighty, and we turns jest where
we sits,

And it only takes one volley to reduce the lamp to bits.

Out where the West Begins

Then we sought the frightened owner, and we paid the
damage done,

But we cautioned him hereafter nary Western film to
run;

“ ’Cause,” we say, “ it makes us nervous — nay, we may
say, peeved and cross —

When we see an actor-cowboy mount the wrong side of
his hoss! ”

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING IN CACTUS CENTER

WOMEN's scarce in Cactus Center, and there ain't no bargain stores

Fer to start them Monday rushes that break down the stoutest doors;

But we had some Christmas shoppin' that the town ain't over yet,

Jest because of one small woman and a drug store toilet set.

She was Cactus Center's teacher, and she had n't left the stage

'Fore she had the boys plum locoed — and I don't bar youth nor age;

She was cute and smart and pretty, and she might 'a' been here yet

If it had n't been fer Dawson and his drug store toilet set.

It was old and scratched and speckled, for 't was in his case for years,

But ol' Dawson, sharp and clever, put a whisper in our ears —

'Lowed he 'd sell that set at auction, and he says: "Now, boys, you bet

This 'ill make a hit with Teacher — this here swell new toilet set."

Out where the West Begins

Well, the biddin' started lively, and it got to gettin' hot,
Fer every mind in Cactus on that single thing was sot ;
Purty soon I 'd staked my saddle, worth two hundred
dollars net,
Jest to own fer one short second that blamed drug store
toilet set.

It was then began the shootin'—no one seems to know
jest how —
And 't was lack of ammunition that at last broke up the
row ;
And thirteen of us was hurted, but the worst blow that
we met
Was in findin' that some bullets had gone through that
toilet set.

But we plugged the punctures in it, and we plugged the
wounded, too,
And agreed we 'd arbitrate it, and the bunch 'd see it
through ;
So we sent a gift committee, but they came back sorer
yet —
Fer the teacher 'd fluttered Eastward — so we 've got that
toilet set.

THE COWBOYS AND THE PROSPECTOR

THE Two-Bar camp has entertained
A minin' feller as a guest;
He drifted in one night it rained—
A prospector who needed rest.

He bunked with us and talked a string
About the gold he hoped to get;
If we had let him run, by jing!
He sure would be a-talkin' yet.

He 'd scratched and dug in hills untold,
A-huntin' fer the mother lode,
But did n't need such heaps of gold
No more 'n the burro that he rode.

He could n't understand why we
Was punchin' cows fer ten a week,
With not a thought that gold might be
In every rock or hill or creek.

And we plum failed to make him out—
His greed for what he could n't spend;
He might be right, but I misdoubt
If such a chap could be a friend.

THE COWBOY AND THE TEMPTER

I MET a well-dressed stranger at the bar in Poker Bill's;
I had just come off the roundup in the far Red Desert
hills.

He spent his gold most lib'ral, but he overplayed his hand
When he tried to buy my cow-hoss for some distant,
warrin' land.

He offered me two hundred, which he boosted seventy-
five.

I let him talk his string out, jest to see where he'd arrive;
And he looked my pony over and then says, "I'm standin'
pat

On an offer of three hundred — and you'd better grab at
that!"

Well, I needed that three hundred, and I needed it plum
bad,

But the thought of sellin' Teton did n't, somehow, make
me glad,

And I says: "I've rode that pony in the rain and in the
sun;

We have romped the range together till our thoughts
melt jest like one;

The Cowboy and the Tempter

I have trained him till in turnin' he can stand upon my
hat;

You should see him on the roundup, he is quicker than a
cat;

When I throw a steer, that pony holds the critter till I tie,
And he loves the game he 's playin', you kin see it in his
eye.

“That there hoss which you would slaughter at the front
acrost the sea

Has shared all my daily troubles, and a comrade is to me.

We have battled snows together when King Winter 's
ruled the plains,

And we 've shared the Chinook breezes and the Summer's
first warm rains.

We have dwelt in sage and cactus till we could n't change
our home,—

When that pony travels elsewhere, why, the rider, too, will
roam.

I admit you 've got me tempted, but my needs 'll have to
wait,

So—durn it, hoss, that stranger's up and pulled his
orn'ry freight!”

A COWBOY'S MUSINGS

THE other day, upon the mesa's level land,
Jest where it slants a leetle to the West,
My hoss destroyed — he could n't understand —
A purty nest.

Some lark had built it 'neath a grassy screen,
And, durn it all! I could n't find the words
To tell my sorrow, when I stooped and seen
Them dead young birds.

Five of 'em there was — not one to test a wing! —
And there the old birds flew, a-callin' sad;
For hours afterward I could n't laugh nor sing,
I felt that bad.

So mebbe this here Death that compasses our end
Is just some blunderin' critter that goes by,
Like my old hoss, and never does intend
To make us die.

THE COWBOY'S HOMING

BILL's home ag'in from Europe, where he featured with a
show,
But he don't talk none about it—his words jest seem to
flow
On the subject of home-comin', and this glorious South-
west land,
Which talk, to all us people, is some hard to onder-
stand.

The stage-driver was tellin' when he hit the sagebrush
flat
That's south of Cactus Center, Bill jest wept behind his
hat,
And he nearly went plum dotty, his joy was so intense,
At the prairie dogs a-scoldin' behind each wire fence.

When the driver stopped at Arid, fer a meal and fer a
rest,
Bill pinned a sprig of cactus like a flower on his vest;
He could n't eat fer lookin' at that endless, dreary plain—
I guess it makes men homesick fer to cross the ragin'
main.

Out where the West Begins

So we let Bill kinder babble 'bout these things we know
so well,

And we 're all a-waitin', patient, fer the glories he will
tell;

In a week or two he'll see things like he had n't been
away —

But the homin' joy has got him on the locoed list to-day.

THE COW-PUNCHER'S ELEGY

I've ridden nigh a thousand leagues upon two bands of steel,
And it takes a grizzled Westerner to know just how I feel;
The ranches dot the strongholds of the old-time saddle-
men,

And the glory of the cattle days can ne'er come back
again.

Oh, the creak of saddle leather—

Oh, the sting of upland weather

When the cowmen roamed the foothills and drove in ten
thousand steers;

Through the years, back in the dreaming,

I can see the camp-fires gleaming,

And the lowing of the night-herd sounds, all faintly, in
my ears.

There's a checkerboard of fences on the vast and wind-
swept range;

And the haystacks and the windmills make the land-
scape new and strange,

And the plains are full of farmers, with their harrows and
their ploughs;

On the roadsides loiter kidlets, who are "driving home
the cows!"

Out where the West Begins

Oh, the quickly faded glory
Of the cowboy's brief, brief story!

How the old range beckons vainly in the sunshine and
the rain!

Oh, the reek of roundup battle
And the thund'ring hoofs of cattle —

But why dream a useless day-dream, that can only give
one pain?

Where have gone those trails historic, where the herders
sought the mart?

Where have gone the saucy cow-towns, where the gun-
man played his part?

Where has gone the Cattle Kingdom, with its armed,
heroic strife?

Each has vanished like a bubble that has lived its' little
life.

Oh, the spurs we set a-jingling,
And the blood that went a-tingling

When we rode forth in the morning, chaps-clad knights in
cavalcade ;

And the mem'ries that come trooping,
And the spirits, sad and drooping,

When the cowman looks about him at the havoc Time has
made.

COW-PUNCHER PHILOSOPHY

THIS world's so doggone big and bright
I'd like to pack my grip
And start out from the ranch some night
On some wide, endless trip;
I'd like to go and never stop
Until, when came death's call,
I'd simply sigh: "All right, old top —
I've seen it all!"

This life is such a thing of joy
Why some folks kick beats me;
How kin they find heart to destroy
The good in all they see?
I'd have each day stretched to a week —
Each week into a year.
But joy and some folks never speak —
It sure is queer!

This thing called Me, it often seems
Ain't mine a little bit;
It's jest a part of Some One's schemes,
And I ain't ownin' it;

Out where the West Begins

But while this thing called Me is here

I'm goin' to treat it right

And work to keep its record clear

With all my might!

THE SHERIFF'S REPORT

We jest went out to git him, and we did—
We trailed him from the sagebrush to the pine;
We seen the long-dead ashes where he 'd hid
And where he 'd cooked his bit of bacon rine.

We found the hoss, where it had fell and died,
But he 'd gone on — a tough nut, yes, that 's true —
We seen the blood where he had stopped and tied
His coat-sleeve round his worn and busted shoe.

We heard his lead, a-singin' past our ears,
Where he stood pat, 'way up a lonely draw;
We smelt his powder, yet it brung no fears,
'Cause was n't we the Majesty of Law?

We seen his face, his black eyes blazin' hate,
We heard him fall, and in plain view he slid;
The world 's some better off, I calkilate —
We jest went out to git him, and we did.

THE DIAMOND HITCH

WHEN camp is moved, at break of day,
Then comes old Packer Bill — a king
Who rules, with most despotic sway,
The while he loads the pack-mule string;
“ Now, stand off, fellers, give him room !
Now, let the critter buck and pitch;
That load will stay till crack o’ doom
’Cause Bill has slung the diamond hitch.”

The helpers stand in trembling awe
And watch the ropes weave round the pack ;
The artist’s lightest word is law
While strong and deft hands show their knack ;
A false move condemnation brings —
“ This noose must go jest thus and sich ;
No tenderfoot must bobble things
When Old Bill slings the diamond hitch.”

Old Bill is gone — and o’er the ways
His caravans trailed, in the past,
The engine thunders through the haze
That hangs above the prairie vast ;

The Diamond Hitch

But ere the dawn of life is fanned,
 Disclosing land of fence and ditch,
I seem to seek the pack-mules stand
 While old Bill slings the diamond hitch.

THE DUDE RANCH

WE used to run a cow-ranch,
In all that old term meant,
But all our ancient glories
In recent years have went;
We 're takin' summer boarders,
And, puttin' it quite rude,
It's now the cowboy's province
To herd the festive dude.

We used to run an outfit,
The greatest in the West;
Our cowboys were the wonders —
Our roundups were the best;
The punchers still are with us,
But now they merely guide
The tenderfoot from Boston
Who 's learnin' how to ride.

We used to brand our cattle
And ship 'em wide and far;
But now we import humans
From off the Pullman car;

The Dude Ranch

The dudes have got us captured
And tied and branded, too ;
And the cowboy 's readin' Ibsen
When his daily toil is through.

THE WHITE MAN'S ROAD

THE white man's road is hard for us to follow;

Our feet are bruised and bleeding, but who shall heed
our cries?

The white man's code — what has it been but hollow?

No ears have caught our pleading — unheard the red
man dies.

The white man's creed is lost in white man's sinning;

Our faith is slowly flagging — no door shall let us in —
None sees our need, though fast our ranks are thinning —
The weary feet are lagging that wear the moccasin.

The white man's word — what has it been but broken?

Our lodge-fires low are burning — without the air is
cold;

And thus unheard, with sorrows deep, unspoken,

All hopeless are we turning — we who were kings of
old!

JIM

Jest from Cattle Land, that 's Jim —

Face that 's tanned by prairie breeze ;
Tall, and sinewy of limb,

Big and friendly hands that squeeze ;
Eyes that look you through and through,
Seekin' out the soul of you.

Jest from Cattle Land, that 's Jim —

Heart as big as all out doors ;
Not a sneer or jeer in him —

Jest lays back his head and roars
Till the hull world seems to smile —
That 's our Jim, of Forty Mile.

Jest from Cattle Land, that 's Jim —

Ought to see him on a hoss ;
Ain't no equine Satan's limb

Goin' to give that boy a toss ;
Yet no bronco fears him long,
'Cause he 's gentle, well as strong.

Jest from Cattle Land, that 's Jim —

Worships women like a knight ;

Out where the West Begins

Young or old, or fat or slim, †

 Lovin' all with love that 's right;

Best type sence the world began,

Bless you — good luck, Jim, old man!

THE HERDER'S REVERIE

THE sheep are down at the water, a-drinkin' their bloom-
in' fill,

An' me and the dog are dozin', as herders and collies will ;
The world may be movin' somewheres, but here it is
standin' still.

It is standin' still as a picter, and even the clouds o'erhead
Look just like the clouds that are painted on the roof of a
sky-blue shed,

And it seems if, to fill the picter, us and the sheep should
be dead.

It 's hard to think that in cities there 's men who are goin'
mad,

Each strivin' to beat his fellows and get what the others had ;
And from this here peaceful viewpoint, such doin's look
bad, plum bad.

So the shadows lengthen and lengthen, in the long-drawn,
lazy day ;

Has any one been any happier than me and my dog —
now say !

I wish, when it 's time fer cashin', I could pass in my checks
this way.

THE MAGIC MULLIGAN

A RIDER from the Two-Bar come with news from off the
range :

He said he 'd seen a dust cloud that looked almighty
strange,

So he rode his bronco over, and there, as bold as brass,
He seen a sheepman feedin' his flock upon our grass.

The rider turned home, pronto, and he got the boys aroused,
And then they started, whoopin', for where them woollies
browsed.

But I met 'em, on their mission, and I heard the hull
bunch groan

When I said : " Now, turn back, fellers, I must play this
hand alone."

I was mad clear to my gizzard when I started for the
camp,

And I thought of how I 'd punish this vile, sheep-herdin'
scamp ;

I 'd escort him to the deadline, where he 'd run his sheep
across,

And in case I had to kill him, why, it would n't be much
loss ;

The Magic Mulligan

And with such thoughts churnin' in me when I spied his
wagon-top

I rode up to the herder as he watched his woolly crop.

But he simply grinned up at me, and he said: "Now,
pardner, say,

Let's set down and have some dinner 'fore we start to
scrap to-day."

He had a stew jest ready and he dished a plateful out,
And I set and et that plateful and I heard far angels shout;
I could hear gold harps a-twangin' and my rough thoughts
seemed to melt

As he dished another plateful and I loosened up my belt.
Then I laid aside my six-guns while the herder dished more
stew,

And at last my foreman rode up, as I knowed that he
would do,

And he set cross-legged with me, and he et, and more
hands come,

And afore that sheepman's cookin' quite the loudest was
struck dumb.

It was mulligan he 'd made there, all alone out in the hills,
This here cook whose magic humbled all my fightin' Toms
and Bills;

Out where the West Begins

You kin talk of hotel dishes, made by chefs from furrin
lands,

But I 'll back this sheepman's cookin' 'gainst all Euro-
pean brands.

So I says, when we had finished : " You kin make yourself
to home,

You kin pick the choicest grazin' and allow your sheep to
roam ;

We will drive our cattle elsewhere — you kin have whate'er
you seek —

If you 'll let us come to dinner, say about three times a
week ! "

THE MARKET TRAIN

THE old caboose is rattlin', and is swayin' to and fro ;
But we 're fog-bound in tobacco, while the tales like magic
grow ;
There 's a big trainload of cattle that is shriekin' down the
grades,
But we 're settin' back contented while we hear of feuds
and raids ;
There 's Ed and Bill and Curly, and a man from Pecos
way —
We 're the chaperons of shipments that are fresh from
prairie hay ;
His load of care is lifted and he feels like givin' cheers
When the cowman goes to market with the season's first
prime steers.

The stories last till midnight, while the old train onward
roars ;
There are tales of blood and slaughter and of evenin'-up
old scores ;
There are stories of the prairie and stories of the hills,
And of deeds of heroism with the mildest full of
thrills.

Out where the West Begins

The smoke keeps gettin' thicker, but nobody wants to
quit—

There 's another story comin', and it 's sure to make a
hit;

There 's history for the writin'— old Homer 'd be all ears
And could write another winner on a trainload of beef
steers.

LITTLE PAPOOSE

YOUR eyes are as black as twin pools at night,
 Little papoose;
And down in their depths I can see Love's light,
 Little papoose;
Let the winter wind round the teepee whine:
My song shall you hear — not the creak of the pine,
 Little papoose of mine!

I love you — how much I cannot tell,
 Little papoose;
I hope you shall love me but half as well,
 Little papoose;
Few are our people and weak have they grown:
We must live, we must love, we must fight alone,
 Little papoose, my own!

In the days when the buffalo roamed the plain,
 Little papoose,
This heart of mine would have known no pain,
 Little papoose;
But — woe to the red when the white comes nigh! —
An alien dwells 'neath our Western sky —
 Little papoose, we die!

THE WATER-CARRIER

STEEP is the trail to the mesa above her —
Maid of the Zuñi-folk, tall and bare-armed ;
Browned by the kiss of the warm winds that love her —
Maid whom the desert's breath never has harmed.

Strange is the view that is stretched far below her —
White sands that melt in a horizon blue ;
Sea without waves, without sail, without rower —
Only the cloud-shadows ploughing it through.

So she has paused, in her bright-colored blanket,
And steadies the jar, while her breath rises fast,
At a niche in the trail, where the beetling cliffs flank it,
As her kindred have paused in the long ages past.

THE OLD DUTCH OVEN

SOME sigh for cooks of boyhood days, but none of them
for me ;

One roundup cook was best of all — 't was with the X-
Bar-T.

And when we heard the grub-pile call at morning, noon,
and night,

The old Dutch oven never failed to cook the things just
right.

'T was covered o'er with red-hot coals, and when we fetched
her out,

The biscuits there were of the sort no epicure would flout.

I ain't so strong for boyhood grub, 'cause, summer, spring,
or fall,

The old Dutch oven baked the stuff that tasted best of all.

Perhaps 't was 'cause our appetites were always mighty
sharp —

The men who ride the cattle range ain't apt to kick or
carp ;

But, anyway, I find myself a-dreaming of that bread

The old Dutch oven baked for us beneath those coals so red.

OLD HOME WEEK IN CACTUS CENTER

Down here in Cactus Center we have had an Old Home
Week;

We have called our sons to see us, though some was far
to seek;

They have drifted from Alaska and they've come from
Mexico;

From the Eastward and the Westward they have trailed
to let us know

That their hearts are still with Cactus, though they're
livin' far away,

And a line of reminiscence was 'most everybody's lay.

They drove in by the stage-load, with the failure next the
plute,

And our welcoming committee greeted each bunch with a
shoot.

There was Rareup Bill, now teamin', and his chum, Pack-
saddle Pete;

They are freightin' in the desert, and they like the desert's
heat;

There was Antelope and Pecos, both from Rio Grandy way,
Where they watch the U. S. border, so the pesky thing
won't stray;

Old Home Week in Cactus Center

There was West Virginia Thompson, who 's a forest ranger
now,

And Tex, who 's took to preachin' sence he broke off with
the cow;

They all swapped endless stories, and each eye was filled
with brine

When the fiddler down to Johnson's sawed a while on
"Auld Lang Syne."

There was Andy, now an author up at Colorado Springs;
There was Wild Horse Kit, now rated as among the
ranchin' kings;

There was 'Pache Bob, the squaw man, that we'd long
give up for dead;

From among the Jicarillas he had mushed his way, he
said.

And some was fat and lazy, and most of 'em was gray,
And they looked at one another in a most astonished way,
And they drank healths to each other, and sometimes two
or three —

To the young and blithe cow-punchers that the old bunch
used to be.

THE OLD SHEEP WAGON

I HAVE heard men long for a palace, but I want no such
abode,

For wealth is a source of trouble, and a jeweled crown
is a load;

I'll take my home in the open, with a mixture of sun and
rain —

Just give me my old sheep wagon, on the boundless
Wyoming plain.

With the calling sheep around me, and my collie's head
on my knees,

I float my cigarette smoke on the sage-scented prairie
breeze;

And at night, when the band is bedded, I creep, like a
tired child,

To my tarp, in the friendly wagon, alone on the sheep
range wild.

Music and art I am missing? — but what great sym-
phony

Can equal the harps of nature that are twanged by the
plains-wind free?

The Old Sheep Wagon

And where is the master of color to match, though for
years he tried,

The purples that veil yon mesa, at the hour of even-
tide?

I have had my fill of mankind, and my dog is my only
friend,

So I'm waiting, here in the sagebrush, for the judg-
ment the Lord may send ;

They'll find me dead in my wagon, out here on the hill-
tops brown,

But I reckon I'll die as easy as I would in a bed in
town!

THE OLD-TIMER

HE showed up in the springtime, when the geese began
to honk ;

He signed up with the outfit, and we fattened up his bronk ;
His chaps were old and tattered, but he never seemed to
mind,

'Cause fer worryin' and frettin' he had never been de-
signed ;

He 's the type of cattle-puncher that has vanished now,
of course,

With his hundred-dollar saddle on his twenty-dollar horse.

He never seemed to bother over fortune's ups and downs,
And he never quit his singin' when the gang was full of
frowns ;

He would lose his roundup money in an hour of swift
play,

But he never seemed discouraged when he ambled on his
way.

He would hit the trail a-singin', and his smile was out full
force,

Though he 'd lost his fancy saddle and he did n't have a
horse.

The Old-Timer

I have wondered where he wanders in these late, degenerate years,

When there are no boundless ranges, and there are no long-horn steers;

But I 'll warrant he is cheerful, though unfriendly is the trail,

And his cigarette is glowing, though his grub supply may fail,

For he had life's happy secret — he had traced it to the source

In his hundred-dollar saddle on his twenty-dollar horse.

OUT AMONG THE BIG THINGS

Out among the big things —
The mountains and the plains —
An hour ain't important,
Nor are the hour's gains;
The feller in the city
Is hurried night and day,
But out among the big things
He learns the calmer way.

Out among the big things —
The skies that never end —
To lose a day ain't nothin',
The days are here to spend;
So why not give 'em freely,
Enjoyin' as we go?
I somehow can't help thinkin'
The good Lord means life so.

Out among the big things —
The heights that gleam afar —
A feller gets to wonder
What means each distant star;

Out among the Big Things

He may not get an answer,
But somehow, every night
He feels, among the big things,
That everything's all right.

THE OSTRICH-PUNCHING OF ARROYO AL

I WAS broke in Arizony, and was gloomy as a tomb
When I got a chance at punchin' for an outfit called Star-
Plume;
I did n't ask no wherefores, but jest lit out with my
tarp,
As happy as an angel with the newest make o' harp.

When I struck out from the bunkhouse, for my first day
on the range,
I thought the tracks we follered was peculiar like and
strange,
And when I asked about it, the roundup foreman sez:
"You ain't a-punchin' cattle, but are herdin' ostriches."

Well, we chased a bunch of critters on the hot and sandy
plain,
Though 't was like a purp a-racin' with a U. S. A. mail
train ;
But at last we got 'em herded in a wire fence corral,
And the foreman sez, off-hand like: "Jest go in and rope
one, Al."

The Ostrich-Punching of Arroyo Al

Well, the first one that I tackled was an Eiffel Tower
bird,

But the noose ain't pinched his thorax 'fore several things
occurred :

He spread his millinery jest as if he meant to fly,
And then reached a stilt out, careless, and smote me above
the eye.

They pulled me out from under that millin' mass o' legs,
And they fed me on hot whiskey and the yolks of ostrich
eggs;

And, as soon as I was able, I pulled freight fer Cattle
Land,

And the ostrich-punchin' business never gits my O. K.
brand.

THE WESTERNER

I'LL never go where hills can't smile
 Upon me, day and night,
And guard me, many a weary mile,
 And aid me in life's fight.

From those white peaks I'll not stray far,
 Where less bright is the day,
Nor see, toward dimmer evening star,
 My camp-smoke curl its way.

I never want to seek in vain
 That wondrous, high plateau —
That sage-clad, rolling Western plain
 Where golden sunsets glow.

I never want to turn unto
 Some rain-washed, foggy shore ;
Here in this vasty land, and new,
 Hunt me forevermore.

PETE'S ERROR

THERE'S a new grave up on Boot Hill, where we've
planted Rowdy Pete;

He died one evenin', sudden, with his leather on his feet;
He was Cactus Center's terror with that work of art, the
Colt,

But somehow, without warnin', he up and missed his holt.

His fav'rite trick in shootin' was to grab his victim's right,
Then draw his own revolver—and the rest was jest
“Good-night”;

He worked it in succession on nine stout and well-armed
men,

But a sickly-lookin' stranger made Pete's feet slip up at
ten.

Pete had follered out his programme and had passed the
fightin' word;

He grabbed the stranger's right hand, when a funny thing
occurred;

The stranger was left-handed, which Pete had n't figgered
out,

And, afore he fixed his error, Pete was dead beyond all
doubt.

Out where the West Begins

It was jest another instance of a flaw in work of man;
A lefty never figgered in the gunman's battle plan;
There ain't no scheme man thinks of that Dame Nature
cannot beat —

So his pupils are unlearnin' that cute trick they got from
Pete.

THE MAN THE DESERT GOT

HE rests, half buried in the drift
Of waterless and silent strands ;
His fingers clutch a mocking gift —
The worthless, wind-blown desert sands ;
He thought to close his hands upon
A heavier and yellow prize,
But now his lusts for gold have gone,
Shriveled beneath those blazing skies.

The lizard flits about his form,
The buzzards circle in the height ;
If there be mercy in yon storm,
May he be covered deep ere night ;
And may the rippling sands smooth o'er
Upon the desert's face the spot
Where ends his quest forevermore,
The quest of him the desert got.

The trails to distant water holes
His plodding feet shall ne'er retrace,
For unto still more distant goals
The prospector has turned his face ;

Out where the West Begins

These shifting sand hills lose their glow,

The breeze no more is furnace hot,

And when the storm ends none shall know

Where rests the man the desert got!

IN A DESERTED MINING CAMP

THE rain, gust-driven, veils the distant pines
 Upon the hill,
Yet cannot hide the skeletons of mines
 And silent mill ;
And through an empty street the cold wind whines
 With hag voice, shrill.

The echoes roused by hoof-strokes of my steed
 Strike on the heart ;
How many tragedies the eye may read
 In this dead mart ;
From cabins, windowless, faint voices plead
 And specters start.

I pause and turn, upon the hillside's crown,
 And vision gropes
Where gleam the rain-washed cabin roofs far down
 The dark'ning slopes ;
But now the night has closed upon the town
 Of buried hopes.

RIDIN' THE CHUCK-LINE

I 'm ridin' the chuck-line this winter;
The bread-line they call it in town —
But it ain't so onpleasant out this way;
Folks treat a man right when he's down;
The latchstring is out at the cabins,
And every man makes the friend's sign;
The chuck-line ain't bad in this West-land —
In fact I 'm a-thinkin' it's fine.

I hung out a week at the Two-Bar,
And I might 'a' been stayin' there yet,
With some one to hand me the makin's
And the light for my cigarette,
But I 'd read all their novels and papers,
And lit'rachoor's sure my best lay;
So I said 'em farewell one bright mornin'
And I 'm here with the Keystone to-day.

Oh, it's off with your saddle and bridle,
And turn your hoss in the corral;
It's handshake and backslap and howdy,
And draw to the fire, old pal;

Ridin' the Chuck-Line

Your bed is the pride of the bunkhouse,
And you eat and you drink of the best;
There's no sort of care goin' to bother
When you're ridin' the chuck-line out West.

THE BLANKET INJUN

Jest a worthless blanket Injun,
 With the turquoise in his ears —
Jest a-loafin' round the trader's,
 'Stead of herdin' sheep or steers;
Not a thing to cause him worry,
 Not a care to give him pain —
Jest a worthless blanket Injun
 With no thought for earthly gain.

Jest a worthless blanket Injun,
 Blinkin' lazy in the sun;
Smokin' cigarettes past number,
 While the precious hours run;
Never seen a railroad engine,
 Never wants to, it would seem —
Rather roll up in his blanket
 And jest watch the blaze and dream.

Jest a worthless blanket Injun —
 Scorns a bid for honest work;
Rather jog off on his pony —
 He's the reservation shirk;

The Blanket Injun

Jest a worthless blanket Injun ;
Never does a tap — and won't —
But I envy him, in secret,
Dash me, partner, if I don't!

THE PONY EXPRESS

THE eddies swirl in the treacherous ford,
And the clouds gather dark ahead.
And over the plain, where the sunlight poured,
Scarce a gleam does the pale moon shed.

The pony drinks, but with gasp and sob,
And wan is the man at its side ;
The way has been long, past butte and knob,
And still he must ride and ride.

Now the cinch is drawn and the plunge is made,
And the bank of the stream is gained ;
Eyes study the darkness, unafraid,
And ne'er is the good horse reined.

And the hoof-beats die on the prairie vast,
To the lone wolf's answering wail —
Thus the ghost of the Pony Express goes past
On the grass-grown Overland Trail.

THE WAR-HORSE BUYERS

TWENTY of us ridin' bronks, headed for the war;
Twenty top-hand saddlemen, up in bustin' lore;
Off the ranges fast they come, hosses black and gray,
Hosses roan and calico, hosses brown and bay;
Saddle, bridle, cinch and ride — buck, you big hoss, buck!
You will be the captain's choice — 'bye, old nag — good
 luck!

*'Tillery and cavalry, 'tillery and cavalry,
That's the way they pick 'em when the judges are at work;
'Tillery and cavalry, 'tillery and cavalry,
Farewell, Western mountain hoss, and don't you ever
 shirk;
Steel and lead and powder smoke, there acrost the way —
If it was n't I 'm a neutral I 'd be off with you to-day.*

All the range is bein' combed of the strong and fit;
Bring more in, you wrangler men — let 'em taste the bit;
Let the busters show each pace, 'neath the captain's eyes;
Good-bye, all of you to-day, to these Western skies;
Twice around the ring you go — saddle off and stand
While the captain tallies you for the fightin' band.

Out where the West Begins

*'Tillery and cavalry, 'tillery and cavalry,
That's the way they pick and choose for the game of war;
'Tillery and cavalry, 'tillery and cavalry,
Little difference where you go — fightin' is in store;
Little difference where you show — most of you must die;
Western hosses, do your best — good luck, and good-bye!*

THE SHEEP-HERDER

ACROSS the stream, from hill and plain,
The sheep unto the bed-ground press ;
And, patiently, face to the rain,
The herder guards, all motionless.

The human presence, close at hand,
Stills all the shadow-born alarm ;
And when black night shuts in, the band
Sleeps peacefully, nor dreams of harm.

And thus a Shepherd Presence, kind,
Though He has ne'er unveiled His face,
Is felt by men, who, weak and blind,
Flock homeward from the market-place.

THE SHEEP-HERDER'S LAMENT

THE cowboy has his bunkie
To share his tarpaulin —
To joke with him and smoke with him
And listen to his chin.
But a sheep-herder, doggone it!
When lonesome breezes moan,
Must grit his teeth and stand it —
He's got to fight alone.

The nester he is married —
Contentment is his lot —
There's laughin' and there's chaffin'
At his ranch (which here there's not).
For the sheep-herder, doggone it!
Don't hear a human voice;
It's enough fer him to listen
While the kyo-tes rejoice.

The city man is bothered
With too many men around;
There's rushin' and there's crushin'
Like when ants swarm o'er the ground.

The Sheep-Herder's Lament

But the sheep-herder, doggone it!

Has miles of space to fill

And nary soul to help him

Watch the sheep feed on the hill.

THE SHEEPMAN'S PLAINT

Cowboys are allus doin'

What sheepmen dassent do ;

They start some trouble brewin'

And folks let it go through ;

They bust the village quiet,

And people kinder grin,

But let a sheepman try it,

And they run the rascal in.

A cowboy fogs a marshal

And makes him hit the trail,

And folks jest say: " We 're partial

To this here joyous male !

We like to see youth bubblin'

And flowin' fancy-free."

But a sheepman 's merely troublin'

When he would merry be.

No town key 's ever handed

To him who herds the sheep,

But cowboys ain't commanded

To quit disturbin' sleep ;

The Sheepman's Plaint

It's jest, so I'm a-thinkin',

This big world's ancient way—

A-smilin' and a-winkin'

When spoiled kids act up gay.

AT THE OUTPOSTS

MEN of the lonely places,
How do you fare to-day?
Men of the wind-swept spaces,
What friend has come your way?

What voice hails from the vastness
Above the cold rain's drip?
What man has found thy fastness
And sought thy comradeship?

What welcome face is gleaming,
What palm has closed o'er thine?
What, then, shall break thy dreaming
Except the sheep-dog's whine?

Men of the lonely places,
How do you fare to-day?
Men of the wind-burnt faces,
How wear your hearts away?

THE DIAMOND DRILL MAN

HE'S cut as clean as a new-made coin,
As he stands in the murk, half dressed;
He's broad of shoulder and lean of loin —
That's him at the tunnel's breast.
He battles against the solid rock,
Down there where it's damp and chill;
He's born of the Ne'erquit fighting stock
Is Jim of the diamond drill.

If there's ever a vein that's gone and pinched,
Or dipped to an unknown plane,
Just send for Jim and the rest is cinched —
The lead shall be caught again;
For the rocks they whisper strange things to Jim
In the heart of the tunneled hill,
And there's never a secret withheld from him —
From Jim of the diamond drill.

The rest of the shift flit through the gloom
Like specters in vaulted grave;
The roar of the blast sweeps through the tomb
On a sulphur-perfumed wave;

Out where the West Begins

And the gold goes out unto mint and mart,
The treasure for which men kill,
Because in the mountain's granite heart
Toils Jim of the diamond drill.

TEX

TEX was all we called him, in them days —
Tex was all the name he answered to ;
“ Tex,” we hollered 'cross the prairie ways
When we called him to his beans and stew ;
Tex was all he told us when he come,
Tex was all he told us when he went ;
Tex was all he needed, too, by gum !
Nothin' else would fit him worth a cent.

Tex was long and lean, and Tex was brown,
Tex was sure a wizzard with the rope,
Tex could drink and stir up things in town —
Allus hit the high spots on a lope ;
Tex could gamble — likewise Tex could shoot
Quicker than a streak of lightnin' bright,
Tex could shake his shapely, high-heeled boot
In a dance and never quit all night.

Tex was sure a hit around the place ;
Tex was allus leadin' work and play ;
No one looked for Tex to hunt disgrace
When he said good-bye to us one day ;

Out where the West Begins

But he 's gone and done it, sure enough—

Tex is past all hope, so men relate;

Tex is now— gee whiz! but it seems tough—

Gov'nor of some doggone Eastern State!

THE TRADERS

Cowboys is the durndest boys to swap;
Two of 'em can't meet and not talk trade;
Other topics take a sudden drop
When some crack 'bout changin' things is made.

Never seen such critters fer a deal;
" 'Lo Jim," " 'Lo Bill " — " I 'll trade you spurs
to-day " ;
Then they talk awhile and pass the steel
'Fore each puncher goes his sep'rate way.

Hundred-dollar saddles changin' hands,
Silver-mounted bridles on the go,
Hats — some havin' rattlesnakes fer bands —
That there " swap " word never gets a " no."

Cowboys is the durndest boys to swap;
Allus tradin' " chaps " and guns and knives;
Never seem to know just when to stop —
Guess if they was married they 'd trade wives !

THE FRONTIER FORT

Its walls of sod have crumbled
 'Neath countless beating rains ;
Its flame-scarred roof is humbled
 And mingled with the plains.

No loopholes now are framing
 Lean faces, grim and brown ;
No more keen eyes are aiming
 To bring the redskin down.

The plough team's trappings jingle
 Across the furrowed field,
And sounds domestic mingle
 Where valor hung its shield.

But every wind careering
 Seems here to breathe a song —
A song of brave frontiering —
 A saga of the strong.

THE BORDER RIDERS

THE devil has opened his furnace door
And poked the coals with his tail,
But we must jog on and jog some more,
Along the outlaws' trail;
And some of us may come back again
And some of us may not;
Plain duty's a term that is harsh to men
In the country God forgot.

Now your throat is dry as a burned-out coal,
And light is the old canteen,
And it's far to the nearest water-hole
Where the slimy moisture's green;
And when you git there the spring has dried,
You'll find, as like as not;
And that's how many a good man's died
In the country God forgot.

But it's jog, jog on in the alkali,
Nor let your bronco lag;
And mind the arroyos as you go by,
Nor let your eyelids sag;

Out where the West Begins

For bullets speed true in the desert land,
Where the sand hills muffle shot,
And it 's short life for him who tips his hand
In the country God forgot.

THE RANGE PIRATES

ME and my hoss — that's all the firm —
We're lords of all this Cattle Land ;
The outfits writhe — but let 'em squirm —
We're here to run our own pet brand.

We live upon the mesas high,
And in the piñons on the plain ;
They 'll never catch us, though they try —
They hunt the rustler all in vain.

We know each rock and pine-clad draw —
We thread ten thousand cattle trails ;
Then let them send the limbs of law —
The rustler's vision never fails.

We brand the stock that others own,
And here 's a gun to back each claim,
And I, who ride the plains alone,
Have seen men shudder at my name.

So come collections, great and small —
The world owes us a life of ease ;
Me and my hoss — us two, that 's all —
We're pirates of the sagebrush seas.

THE BUNKHOUSE

THE bunkhouse on the cattle ranch
Was lowly, but at night
When its small window was aglow
We hurried to that light,
And merrily we trooped within
And flung our saddles down,
And there were tales for all to hear
Told by the plainsmen brown.

The bunkhouse walls were papered o'er
With scraps from everywhere—
With pictures of great battleships
And ladies who were fair;
And all could read strange bits of news,
While many comrades' scrawls
Were written there, illegibly,
Upon the bunkhouse walls.

I've traveled many miles since then,
But oft, when sets the sun,
I think about the bunkhouse, low,
Where cowboys, one by one,

The Bunkhouse

Came strolling in to chat and smoke
And play a game of cards ;
I'd even stand for their long snores —
Where are you, good old pards !

THE HIGH-HEELED BOOTS

HE stands upon the city street, keen-eyed, and brown of
face,

He seems to bring a breath of air from some broad
prairie space ;

He's perched upon a pair of heels that fit the stirrup's
curve,

That meet the bucking bronco's plunge and counteract
each swerve ;

And of all the chaps with whom the gods are ever in
cahoots

Give me the cattle-puncher in the high-heeled boots.

He brings a hint of wider skies, of ranges that are vast,
Of manful vigils in the days when sweeps the wintry
blast ;

All out of step with things in town, he sees the crowd
surge by ;

The sage is in his nostrils still — he hears the gaunt
wolf cry ;

He rides as Alexander rode — the bell rings when he
shoots —

The gallant cattle-puncher in the high-heeled boots.

The High-Heeled Boots

He is the last of that old guard defending Cattle Land,
Those knights who jousted for the cause — blood broth-
ers of the brand;
But now they 've fenced the water-hole, they 're harrow-
ing the plain,
They 're changing all the sagebrush flats to fields of
waving grain ;
The cowmen will be gone, they say, and there are no re-
cruits —
Good-bye, brave cattle-puncher in the high-heeled boots!

THE HOMESTEADER

THERE ain't no smilin' vistas out where I've drove my stakes,
There 's nothin' much around me but prairie dogs and
snakes ;

My nearest neighbor's dwellin' is forty miles away,
And when I go a-shoppin' I git back late next day ;
My cabin 's like an island, stuck in the prairie sea,
But I'm holdin' down this homestead for Mary Ann and me.

The nearest shade around me is down by Lone Tree Draw,
There ain't no plays and op'rys, there ain't no books and
law ;

The dog 's all I can speak to, except my saddle nag,
But, spite of all the silence, the days don't ever drag ;
If I was all that figgered, I 'd pull my freight — but gee !
I 'm holdin' down this homestead for Mary Ann and me.

I 've seen lots bleaker places that blossomed as the rose ;
A lovin' touch works wonders, wherever mankind goes ;
The desert yields to kindness, just like a livin' thing —
It pays you back, most lavish, for all the care you bring ;
So come along then, stranger, in five years — mebbly three —
And see my purty homestead, and Mary Ann and me !

THE KIDDIES' PLAY-HOUR

THE p'rade ground is swimmin' in sunshine, the colors
a-snap in the breeze ;

No call from the harsh, blarin' bugles is stillin' the birds
in the trees ;

The nurses are out with the kiddies — here and there is
an officer's wife —

And the sentry — that's me — gits a chanst fer to see
the bright spot in sojerin' life.

There is children all over the cannon, and rollin' around
on the grass ;

I 'm tempted to romp with the rascals each time I must
pass and repass ;

Fer it's hard to keep scowlin', believe me, and lookin'
right straight on ahead,

When the kiddies come out, with their laughter and
shout, each raisin' particular Ned.

No distinctions of rank they 're observin' — faith, look at
that lieutenant's kid

Who's kissin' the colonel's own baby just as freely as
if he was bid !

Out where the West Begins

The lesson they 're teachin' their elders no doubt is inspired above :

Though man salutes man, jest as meek as he can,
the babes get along through pure love.

So I'm grindin' in front of the clinkies, but my heart is not deep in the job,

Fer the voices that come from the playground bring my heart in my throat with a sob ;

There was one of my own — but no matter, I 'm not of the share-trouble sort —

So I pace down and back, with my soul on the rack,
while the little ones play at the fort.

THE INDIAN POLICE

GIVE us the wind in our faces —

'T is good for a man to feel!

Give us the unfenced spaces —

Give us the roweled heel!

The song we would hear in all kinds of weather
Is the endless creaking of saddle leather.

Give us a camp in the thicket,

Far from the traveled ways;

Give us a horse to picket

While the great star sentries blaze;

We'll be off on the track of him we are trailing
Ere the moon in yon cloud veil has started paling.

Give us a quest of peril —

Danger's the choicest spice!

O'er plains that are wild and sterile

We hasten to pay the price!

And he who would rustle the Indian's cattle
Must turn ere his getaway — turn to do battle!

IN LONESOME LAND

IN Lonesome Land few friends is all you need —
To have a hundred seems like foolishness ;
A chap drops in, and has a smoke and feed,
And then he says: “ So long — I ’ll go, I guess.”

But somehow when he ’s gone, you think a heap
About his virtues — how he ’s square and true ;
If more come stringin’ in they ’d make it cheap —
This friendship thing — and spoil it all for you.

Next day — or maybe ’t aint until next week —
Another friend drops in and sets awhile ;
You ’re mighty glad to have the poorest seek
You out — where blocks are measured by the mile.

And so they come — the few and far between —
You get a chance to weigh ’em in your hand ;
You ain’t a-huntin’ little tricks and mean,
But see the good in friends in Lonesome Land.

THE INVALID

SICK in the cow-camp — moonin' round
The smolderin' fire in the rain,
A-feelin' like a rat, half drowned,
And racked from head to foot with pain;
The nearest ranch house twenty mile —
Nobody here to care a dang
Whether I live or die — no smile
That sorter helps to ease a pang.

Sick in the cow-camp — Slim, the cook,
Is growlin' 'cause the flour 's wet;
Fussin' because he 's dropped a hook
Into the fire — hear him fret!
Nothin' around but trees and plain —
The river makes a gurglin' noise;
Nothin' but flood, and rain and rain,
And nary a signal from the boys.

Sick in the cow-camp — but I hear
Hoofs splashin' through the oozy mud;
The boys have come — I catch a cheer —
Their sturdy yellin' stirs my blood;

Out where the West Begins

I see a yaller slicker gleam,
And catch my bunkie's friendly call;
Sick? Well, I guess not — it don't seem
As if I'd been laid up at all.

THE MOTHER LODE

IN vain have the hunters of gold
Sought me through all the years —
They have prayed for me, young and old,
But what mean their sighs and tears?

I have mocked at them on the heights
And have seen them die on the crest;
I have heard them cry out o' nights,
In their slumbers that brought no rest.

I have lured them among the pines,
Where the snows of winter are deep;
They have driven their futile mines,
But little the gold they reap.

I have laughed, as they talked of me
In the silences on the slopes;
I have wrestled the golden key
From the prospector's hand that gropes.

For none shall look on my face,
But always ambition's goad
Shall lash this poor human race
In the search for the Mother Lode.

THE MEETING

WHEN walkin' down a city street,
Two thousand miles from home,
The pavestones hurtin' of the feet
That never ought to roam,
A pony jest reached to one side
And grabbed me by the clothes;
He smelled the sagebrush, durn his hide —
You bet a pony knows!

I stopped and petted him, and seen
A brand upon his side;
I'll bet across the prairie green
He useter hit his stride;
Some puncher of the gentle cow
Had owned him — that I knows;
Which same is why he jest says: "How!
There's sagebrush in your clothes."

He knowed the smell — no doubt it waked
Him out of some bright dream;
In some far stream his thirst is slaked —
He sees the mountains gleam;

The Meeting

He bears his rider far and fast,
And real the hull thing grows
When I come sorter driftin' past
With sagebrush in my clothes.

Poor little hoss! It's tough to be
Away from that fair land —
Away from that wide prairie sea
With all its vistas grand;
I feel for you, old hoss, I do —
It's hard the way life goes;
I'd like to travel back with you —
Back where that sagebrush grows!

BEFORE THE GRINGO CAME

BEFORE the Gringo came, señor,
We were most happy here ;
The blue waves sparkled, and the shore
Seemed green instead of sear ;
My people sang — the castanets
Were clicking through the night ;
There were no tears — no vain regrets —
And life, señor, was bright.

There rose the tinkle of guitars
On every moonlit eve ;
Our hearts then bore no deathless scars —
Nobody seemed to grieve ;
The dancing throng was everywhere —
The fandango lured all ;
But everything to-day, save care,
Has heard the Gringo's call.

You Gringos, what a folk you are
To make light laughter die ;
All solemn, stern, you roam afar
And slay the butterfly ;

Before the Gringo Came

Once we were happy — once, I say —

And life a living flame,

But lo! dead ashes strewed our way

The day the Gringo came.

MEN IN THE ROUGH

MEN in the rough — on the trails all new-broken —
Those are the friends we remember with tears;
Few are the words that such comrades have spoken —
Deeds are their tributes that last through the years.

Men in the rough — sons of prairie and mountain —
Children of nature, warm-hearted, clear-eyed;
Friendship with them is a never-sealed fountain;
Strangers are they to the altars of pride.

Men in the rough — curt of speech to their fellows —
Ready in everything, save to deceive;
Theirs are the friendships that time only mellows,
And death cannot sever the bonds that they weave.

THE END

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